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LETHE.

A

DRAMATIC SATIRE:

WITH THE

Additional Character of Lord CHALKSTONE.

As it is Performed at the

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

The FIFTH EDITION.

By DAVID GARRICK.

LONDON:

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DCC LVII.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

Æsop	Mr. *Bransby.*
Mercury	Mr. *Beard.*
Charon	Mr. *W. Vaughan.*
Lord Chalkstone	Mr. *Garrick.*
A Fine Gentleman	Mr. *Woodward.*
Drunken Man	Mr. *Yates.*
Frenchman, Old Man	Mr. *Blakes.*
Mr. Tatoo	Mr. *Marr.*
Poet, Taylor	*Omitted in the Repreſentation.*
Mrs. Riot	Mrs. *Clive.*
Mrs. Tatoo	Miſs *Minors.*

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

LETHE.

SCENE, *a Grove,*

With a View of the River LETHE.

CHARON *and* ÆSOP *discovered.*

CHARON.

PRITHEE, Philosopher, what grand Affair is transacting upon Earth? There is something of Importance going forward I am sure; for *Mercury* flew over the *Styx* this Morning, without paying me the usual Compliments.

Æsop. I'll tell thee, *Charon*; this is the Anniversary of the Rape of *Proserpine*; on which Day for the future, *Pluto* has permitted her to demand from him something for the Benefit of Mankind.

Char. I understand you;——his Majesty's Passions, by a long Possession of the Lady, are abated; and so, like a mere Mortal, he must now flatter her Vanity, and sacrifice his Power, to atone for Deficiencies—But what has our Royal Mistress proposed in Behalf of her favourite Mortals?

Æsop. As Mankind, you know, are ever complaining of their Cares, and dissatisfied with their Conditions, the generous *Proserpine* has begg'd of *Pluto*, that they may have free Access to the Waters of *Lethe*, as a sovereign Remedy for their Complaints—— Notice has been already given above, and Proclamation made: *Mercury* is to conduct them to the *Styx*, you are to ferry 'em over to *Elysium*, and I am placed here to distribute the Waters.

Char. A very pretty Employment I shall have of it, truly! If her Majesty has often these Whims, I must petition the Court either to build a Bridge over the River, or let me resign my Employment. Do their Majesties know the Difference of Weight between Souls and Bodies? However, I'll obey their Commands to the best of my Power; I'll row my crazy Boat over and meet 'em; but many of them will be relieved from their Cares before they reach *Lethe*.

Æsop. How so, *Charon*?

Char.

Char. Why, I ſhall leave half of 'em in the *Styx*; and any Water is a Specifick againſt Care, provided it be taken in Quantity.

Enter Mercury.

Mer. Away to your Boat, *Charon*; there are ſome Mortals arriv'd; and the Females among 'em will be very clamorous, if you make 'em wait.

Char. I'll make what Haſte I can, rather than give thoſe fair Creatures a Topick for Converſation.

Noiſe within, Boat, Boat, Boat! Coming — coming — Zounds, you are in a plaguy Hurry, ſure! No Wonder theſe Mortal Folks have ſo many Complaints, when there's no Patience among 'em; if they were dead now, and to be ſettled here for ever, they'd be damn'd before they'd make ſuch a Rout to come over, — but Care I ſuppoſe is thirſty, and 'till they have drench'd themſelves with *Lethe*, there will be no Quiet among 'em; therefore I'll e'en to work; and ſo, Friend *Æſop*, and Brother *Mercury*, good bye to 'ye.

[*Exit* Charon.

Æſop. Now to my Office of Judge and Examiner, in which, to the beſt of my Knowledge, I will act with Impartiality; for I will immediately relieve real Objects, and only divert myſelf with Pretenders.

Mer. Act as your Wisdom directs, and conformable to your earthly Character, and we shall have few Murmurers.

Æsop. I still retain my former Sentiments, never to refuse Advice or Charity to those that want either; Flattery and Rudeness should be equally avoided; Folly and Vice should never be spared; and tho' by acting thus, you may offend many, yet you will please the better Few; and the Approbation of one virtuous Mind, is more valuable than all the noisy Applause, and uncertain Favours of the Great and Guilty.

Mer. Incomparable *Æsop!* both Men and Gods admire thee! We must now prepare to receive these Mortals; and lest the Solemnity of the Place should strike 'em with too much Dread, I'll raise Musick shall dispel their Fears, and embolden them to approach.

SONG.

I.

Ye Mortals whom Fancies and Troubles perplex,
Whom Folly misguides, and Infirmities vex;
Whose Lives hardly know what it is to be blest,
Who rise without Joy, and lie down without Rest;
Obey the glad Summons, to Lethe *repair,*
Drink deep of the Stream, and forget all your Care.

II.

Old Maids shall forget what they wish for in vain,
And young ones the Rover, they cannot regain;
The Rake shall forget how last Night he was cloy'd,
And Chloe *again be with Passion enjoy'd;*
Obey then the Summons, to Lethe *repair,*
And drink an Oblivion to Trouble and Care.

III.

The Wife at one Draught may forget all her Wants,
Or drench her fond Fool, to forget her Gallants;
The troubled in Mind shall go chearful away,
And Yesterday's Wretch be quite happy To-day;
Obey then the Summons, to Lethe *repair,*
Drink deep of the Stream, and forget all your Care.

Æsop. Mercury, Charon has brought over one Mortal already, conduct him hither.

[*Exit* Mercury.

Now for a large Catalogue of Complaints, without the Acknowledgment of one single Vice; — here he comes — if one may guess at his Cares by his Appearance, he really wants the Assistance of *Lethe*.

Enter

Enter Poet.

Poet. Sir, your humble Servant—your humble Servant——your name is *Æſop*—I know your Perſon intimately, tho' I never ſaw you before; and am well acquainted with you, tho' I never had the Honour of your Converſation.

Æſop. You are a Dealer in Paradoxes, Friend.

Poet. I am a Dealer in all Parts of Speech, and in all the Figures of Rhetoric——I am a Poet, Sir——and to be a Poet, and not acquainted with the great *Æſop*, is a greater Paradox than—I honour you extremely Sir; you certainly, of all the Writers of Antiquity, had the greateſt, the ſublimeſt Genius, the——

Æſop. Hold, Friend, I hate Flattery.

Poet. My own Taſte exactly, I aſſure you; Sir, no Man loves Flattery leſs than myſelf.

Æſop. So it appears, Sir, by your being ſo ready to give it away.

Poet. You have hit it, Mr. *Æſop*, you have hit it——I have given it away indeed, I did not receive one Farthing for my laſt Dedication, and yet would you believe it?——I abſolutely gave all the Virtues in Heav'n, to one of the loweſt Reptiles upon Earth.

Æſop. 'Tis hard, indeed, to do dirty Work for nothing.

Poet.

Poet. Ay, Sir, to do dirty Work, and ſtill be dirty oneſelf is the Stone of *Syſiphus*, and the Thirſt of *Tantalus*—— You *Greek* Writers, indeed, carried your Point by Truth and Simplicity,—they won't do now a-Days——our Patrons muſt be tickled into Generoſity—you gain'd the greateſt Favours, by ſhewing your own Merits, we can only gain the ſmalleſt, by publiſhing thoſe of other People.—— You flouriſh'd by Truth, we ſtarve by Fiction; *Tempora mutantur.*

Æſop. Indeed, Friend, if we may gueſs by your preſent Plight, you have proſtituted your Talents to very little Purpoſe.

Poet. To very little, upon my Word—but they ſhall find that I can open another Vein ——Satire is the Faſhion, and Satire they ſhall have—let 'em look to it, I can be ſharp as well as ſweet—I can ſcourge as well as tickle, I can bite as——

Æſop. You can do any thing, no doubt; but to the Buſineſs of this Viſit, for I expect a great deal of Company—What are your Troubles, Sir;

Poet. Why, Mr. *Æſop*, I am troubled with an odd kind of Diſorder—I have a ſort of a Whiſtling—a Singing—a Whizzing as it were in my Head, which I cannot get rid of——

Æſop. Our Waters give no Relief to bodily Diſorders, they only affect the Memory.

Poet.

Poet. From whence all my Diſorder proceeds——I'll tell you my Caſe, Sir——— You muſt know, I wrote a Play ſome time ago, preſented a Dedication of it to a certain young Nobleman — He approv'd, and accepted of it, but before I could taſte his Bounty, my Piece was unfortunately damn'd: ——I loſt my Benefit, nor could I have Recourſe to my Patron, for I was told that his Lordſhip play'd the beſt Catcall the firſt Night, and was the merrieſt Perſon in the whole Audience.

Æſop. Pray what do you call damning a Play?

Poet. You cannot poſſibly be ignorant, what it is to be damn'd, Mr. *Æſop*?

Æſop. Indeed I am, Sir——We had no ſuch thing among the *Greeks*.

Poet. No, Sir!——No Wonder then that you *Greeks* were ſuch fine Writers——It is impoſſible to be deſcribed, or truly felt, but by the Author himſelf——If you could but get a Leave of Abſence from this World for a few Hours, you might perhaps have an Opportunity of ſeeing it yourſelf——There is a Sort of a new Piece comes upon our Stage this very Night, and I am pretty ſure it will meet with its Deſerts, at leaſt it ſhall not want my helping Hand, rather than you ſhould be diſappointed of ſatisfying your Curioſity.

Æſop.

Æsop. You are very obliging, Sir;—but to your own Misfortunes, if you please.

Poet. Envy, Malice, and Party destroy'd me——You must know, Sir, I was a great Damner myself, before I was damn'd—So the Frolicks of my Youth were return'd to me with double Interest, from my Brother Authors——But, to say the Truth, my Performance was terribly handled, before it appear'd in publick.

Æsop. How so, pray?

Poet. Why, Sir, some squeamish Friends of mine prun'd it of all the Bawdy and Immorality, the Actors did not speak a Line of the Sense or Sentiment, and the Manager (who writes himself) struck out all the Wit and Humour, in order to lower my Performance to a Level with his own.

Æsop. Now, Sir, I am acquainted with you Case, what have you to propose?

Poet. Notwithstanding the Success of my first Play, I am strongly persuaded that my next may defy the Severity of Criticks, the Sneer of Wits, and the Malice of Authors.

Æsop. What! have you been hardy enough to attempt another?

Poet. I must eat, Sir—I must live——but when I sit down to write, and am glowing with the Heat of my Imagination, then—this damn'd Whistling——or Whizzing in my Head, that I told you of, so disorders me, that I grow giddy——In short, Sir, I am haunted,

haunted, as it were, with the Ghoſt of my deceas'd Play, and its dying Groans are for ever in my Ears.—— Now, Sir, if you will give me but a Draught of *Lethe*, to forget this unfortunate Performance, it will be of more real Service to me, than all the Waters of *Helicon*.

Æſop. I doubt, Friend, you cannot poſſibly write better, by merely forgeting that you have written before; beſides, if, when you drink to the Forgetfulneſs of your own Works, you ſhould unluckily forget thoſe of other People too, your next Piece will certainly be the worſe for it.

Poet. You are certainly in the right—— What then would you adviſe me to?

Æſop. Suppoſe you could prevail upon the Audience to drink the Water; their forgeting your former Work, might be of no ſmall Advantage to your future Productions.

Poet. Ah, Sir! if I could but do that—— but I am afraid—*Lethe* will never go down with the Audience.

Æſop. Well, ſince you are bent upon it, I ſhall indulge you—— If you pleaſe to walk in that Grove, (which will afford you many Subjects for your poetical Contemplation) till I have examined the reſt, I will diſmiſs you in your Turn.

Poet. And I in return, Sir, will let the World know, in a Preface to my next Piece, that your Politeneſs is equal to your Sagacity,

and

and that you are as much the fine Gentleman as the Philoſopher. [*Exit* Poet.

Æſop. Oh! your Servant, Sir —— In the Name of Miſery and Mortality, what have we here!

Enter an Old Man, *ſupported by a* Servant.

Old Man. Oh! la! oh! bleſs me, I ſhall never recover the Fatigue —— Ha! what are you, Friend? Are you the famous *Æſop*? And are you ſo kind, ſo very good to give People the Waters of Forgetfulneſs for nothing?

Æſop. I am that Perſon, Sir; but you ſeem to have no need of my Waters; for you muſt have already out-liv'd your Memory.

Old Man. My Memory is indeed impair'd, it is not ſo good as it was; but ſtill it is better than I wiſh it, at leaſt in regard to one Circumſtance; there is one Thing which ſits very heavy at my Heart, and which I would willingly forget.

Æſop. What is it, pray?

Old Man. Oh la! —— oh! — I am horribly fatigued —— I am an old Man, Sir, turn'd of Ninety —— We are all mortal, you know, ſo I would fain forget, if you pleaſe —— that I am to die,

Æſop. My good Friend, you have miſtaken the Virtue of the Waters: They can cauſe

you to forget only what is paſt; but if this was in their Power, you would ſurely be your own Enemy, in deſiring to forget what ought to be the only Comfort of one, ſo poor and wretched as you ſeem. What! I ſuppoſe now, you have left ſome dear loving Wife behind, that you can't bear to think of parting with.

Old Man. No, nō, no; I have buried my Wife and forgot her long ago.

Æſop. What, you have Children then, whom you are unwilling to leave behind you!

Old Man. No, no, no; I have no Children at preſent—hugh——I don't know what I may have.

Æſop. Is there any Relation or Friend, the Loſs of whom——

Old Man. No, no; I have out-lived all my Relations; and as for Friends——I have none to loſe——

Æſop. What can be the Reaſon then, that in all this apparent Miſery you are ſo afraid of Death, which would be your only Cure.

Old Man.—Oh, Lord!——I have one Friend, and a true Friend indeed, the only Friend in whom a wiſe Man places any Confidence——I have——Get a little farther off, *John*—— [*Servant retires*] I have, to ſay the Truth, a little Money——it is that indeed, which cauſes all my Uneaſineſs.

Æſop.

Æſop. Thou never ſpok'ſt a truer Word in thy Life, old Gentleman ——— [*Aſide.*] But I can cure you of your Uneaſineſs immediately.

Old Man. Shall I forget then that I am to die, and leave my Money behind me?

Æſop. No——but you ſhall forget that you have it—which will do altogether as well—One large Draught of *Lethe*, to the Forgetfulneſs of your Money, will reſtore you to perfect Eaſe of Mind; and as for your bodily Pains, no Water can relieve them.

Old Man. What does he ſay, *John*—eh?——I am hard of Hearing.

John. He adviſes your Worſhip to drink to forget your Money.

Old Man. What!—what!——will his Drink get me Money, does he ſay?

Æſop. No, Sir, the Waters are of a wholſomer Nature—for they'll teach you to forget your Money.

Old Man. Will they ſo?—Come, come, *John*, we are got to the wrong Place——The poor old Fool here does not know what he ſays—Let us go back again, *John*—I'll drink none of your Waters, Not I——Forget my Money! Come along, *John*.

[*Exeunt.*

Æſop. Was there ever ſuch a Wretch! If theſe are the Cares of Mortals, the Waters of Oblivion cannot cure them.

R-enter

Re-enter Old Man *and* Servant.

Old Man. Lookee, Sir, I am come a great Way, and am loth to refuſe Favours that coſt nothing—ſo I don't care if I drink a little of your Waters——Let me ſee—ay—I'll drink to forget how I *got* my Money——And my Servant there, he ſhall drink a little, to forget that I have any Money at all—and, d'ye hear, *John*—take a hearty Draught. If my Money muſt be forgot, why e'en let *him* forget it.

Æſop. Well, Friend, it ſhall be as you would have it——You'll find a Seat in that Grove yonder, where you may reſt yourſelf till the Waters are diſtributed.

Old Man. I hope it wont be long, Sir, for Thieves are buſy now—and I have an Iron Cheſt in the other World, that I ſhould be ſorry any one peep'd into but myſelf—— So pray be quick, Sir. [*Exeunt.*

Æſop. Patience, Patience, old Gentleman. ——But here comes ſomething tripping this Way, that ſeems to be neither Man nor Woman, and yet an odd Mixture of both.

Enter a Fine Gentleman.

Fine Gent. Harkee, old Friend, do you ſtand Drawer here?

Æſop.

Æsop. Drawer, young Fop! Do you know where you are, and who you talk to?

Fine Gent. Not I dem me! But 'tis a Rule with me, wherever I am, or whoſoever I am with, to be always eaſy and familiar.

Æsop. Then let me adviſe you, young Gentleman, to drink the Waters, and forget that Eaſe and Familiarity.

Fine Gent. Why ſo, Daddy? would you not have me well bred?

Æsop. Yes; but you may not always meet with People ſo polite as yourſelf, or ſo paſſive as I am; and if what you call Breeding, ſhould be conſtru'd Impertinence, you may have a Return of Familiarity, may make you repent your Education as long as you live.

Fine Gent. Well ſaid, old Dry-beard, egad you have a Smattering of an odd kind of a ſort of a Humour; but come, come, prithee give me a Glaſs of your Waters, and keep your Advice to yourſelf.

Æsop. I muſt firſt be informed, Sir, for what purpoſe you drink 'em.

Fine Gent. You muſt know, Philoſopher, I want to forget two Qualities——My *Modeſty*, and my *Good-nature*.

Æsop. Your Modeſty and Good-nature!

Fine Gent. Yes, Sir—I have ſuch a conſummate *Modeſty*, that when a fine Woman (which is often the Caſe) yields to my Addreſſes, egad I run away from her; and I am

ſo

ſo very *good-natured*, that when a Man affronts me, egad I run away too.

Æſop. As for your Modeſty, Sir, I am afraid you are come to the wrong Waters;—and if you will take a large Cup to the Forgetfulneſs of your Fears, your Good-nature I believe, will trouble you no more.

Fine Gent. And this is your Advice, my Dear, eh?

Æſop. My Advice, Sir, would go a great deal farther—I ſhould adviſe you to drink to the Forgetfulneſs of every thing you know.

Fine Gent. The Devil you would; then I ſhould have travell'd to a fine Purpoſe, truly; you don't imagine, perhaps, that I have been three Years abroad, and have made the Tour of *Europe*?

Æſop. Yes, Sir, I gueſs'd you had travell'd by your Dreſs and Converſation: But, pray, (with Submiſſion) what valuable Improvements have you made in theſe Travels?

Fine Gent. Sir, I learnt Drinking in *Germany*, Muſick and Painting in *Italy*, Dancing, Gaming, and ſome other Amuſements, at *Paris*; and in *Holland*—faith, nothing at all; I brought over with me the beſt Collection of *Venetian* Ballads, two Eunuchs, a *French* Dancer, and a Monkey, with Tooth-picks, Pictures and Burlettas—In ſhort, I have ſkim'd the Cream of every Nation, and have the Conſolation to declare, I never was in any Country

Country in my Life, but I had Taſte enough thoroughly to deſpiſe my own.

Æſop. Your Country is greatly obliged to you,—but if you are ſettled in it now, how can your Taſte and Delicacy endure it?

Fine Gent. Faith my Exiſtence is merely ſupported by Amuſements; I dreſs, viſit, ſtudy Taſte, and write Sonnets; by Birth, Travel, Education, and natural Abilities, I am entitled to lead the Faſhion; I am principal Connoiſſeur at all Auctions, chief Arbiter at Aſſemblies, profeſs'd Critic at the Theatres, and a fine Gentleman——every where———

Æſop. Critic, Sir, pray what's that?

Fine Gent. The Delight of the Ingenious, the Terror of Poets, the Scourge of Players, and the Averſion of the Vulgar.

Æſop. Pray, Sir, (for I fancy your Life muſt be ſomewhat particular) how do you paſs your Time; the Day, for Inſtance?

Fine Gent. I lie in Bed all Day, Sir.

Æſop. How do you ſpend your Evenings then?

Fine Gent. I dreſs in the Evening, and go generally behind the Scenes of both Playhouſes; not, you may imagine, to be diverted with the Play, but to intrigue, and ſhew myſelf———I ſtand upon the Stage, talk loud, and ſtare about—which confounds the Actors, and diſturbs the Audience; upon which the

Gallants, who hate the Appearance of one of us, begin to *Hiss*, and cry *off, off*, while I undaunted ſtamp my Foot ſo —— ſoll with my Shoulder thus —— take Snuff with my Right-hand, and ſmile contemptuously —— thus —— This exaſperates the Savages, and they attack us with Volleys of ſuck'd Oranges, and half eaten Pippens ——

Æſop. And you retire.

Fine Gent. Without doubt, if I am ſober —— for Orange will ſtain Silk, and an Apple may diſfigure a Feature.

Æſop. I am afraid, Sir, for all this, that you are oblig'd to your own Imagination, for more than three Fourths of your Importance.

Fine Gent. Damn the old Prig, I'll bully him —— [*Aſide*] Lookee, old Philoſopher, I find you have paſs'd your Time ſo long in Gloom and Ignorance below here, that our Notions above Stairs are too refined for you; ſo as we are not likely to agree, I ſhall cut Matters very ſhort with you —— Bottle me off the Waters I want, or you ſhall be convinc'd that I have Courage, in the drawing of a Cork; —— diſpatch me inſtantly, or I ſhall make bold to throw you into the River, and help myſelf —— What ſay you to that now? eh?

Æſop. Very civil and conciſe! I have no great Inclination to put your Manhood to the Trial; ſo if you will be pleas'd to walk in the Grove there, 'till I have examined ſome

some I see coming, we'll compromise the Affair between us.

Fine Gent. Yours, as you behave—*au Revoir!* [*Exit* Fine Gent.

Enter Mr. Bowman (*hastily*)

Bow. Is your Name *Æsop*?

Æsop. It is, Sir—Your Commands with me?

Bow. My Lord *Chalkstone*, to whom I have the Honour to be a Friend and Companion, has sent me before, to know if you are at Leisure to receive his Lordship.

Æsop. I am placed here on Purpose to receive every Mortal that attends our Summons——

Bow. My Lord is not of the common Race of Mortals, I assure you; and you must look upon this Visit as a particular Honour, for he is so much afflicted with the Gout and Rheumatism, that we had much ado to get him across the River.

Æsop. His Lordship has certainly some pressing Occasion for the Waters, that he endures such Inconveniencies to get at them.

Bow. No Occasion at all — His Legs indeed fail him a little, but his Heart is as sound as ever, nothing can hurt his Spirits; ill or well, his Lordship is always the best Company, and the merriest in his Family——

Æsop. I have very little Time for Mirth and good Company; but I'll lessen the Fatigue of his Journey, and meet him half Way. [*Going.*

Bow. His Lordship is here already —— There's a Spirit! Mr. *Æsop* — There's a great Man! — See how superior he is to his Infirmities; such a Soul ought to have a better Body.

Enter Mercury *with Lord* Chalkstone.

Lord Ch. Not so fast, Monsieur *Mercury* — you are a little too nimble for me. Well, *Bowman*, have you found the Philosopher?

Bow. This is he, my Lord, and ready to receive your Commands.

Lord Ch. Ha! ha! ha! There he is, profecto! — *toujours le Meme!* [*Looking at him through a Glass*] I should have known him at a Mile's Distance — a most noble Personage indeed! — and truly *Greek* from Top to Toe. —— Most venerable *Æsop*, I am in this World and the other, above and below, yours most sincerely.

Æsop. I am yours, my Lord, *as* sincerely, and I wish it was in my Pow'r to relieve your Misfortune.

Lord Ch. Misfortune! what Misfortune? — I am neither a Porter nor a Chairman, Mr. *Æsop* —— My Legs can bear my Body to my

Friends and my Bottle; I want no more with them; the Gout is welcome to the reſt—eh *Bowman*?

Bow. Your Lordſhip is in fine Spirits!

Æſop. Does not your Lordſhip go through a great deal of Pain?

Lord Ch. Pain? ay, and Pleaſure too, eh *Bowman!*—When I'm in Pain, I curſe and ſwear it away again, and the Moment it is gone, I loſe no Time; I drink the ſame Wines, eat the ſame Diſhes, keep the ſame Hours, the ſame Company; and, notwithſtanding the Gravity of my wife Doctors, I would not abſtain from *French* Wines and *French* Cookery, to ſave the Souls and Bodies of the whole College of Phyſicians——

Æſop. My Lord has fine Spirits indeed! [*To* Bowman.

Lord Ch. You don't imagine, Philoſopher, that I have hobbled here with a Bundle of Complaints at my Back. My Legs, indeed, are ſomething the worſe for wear, but your Waters, I ſuppoſe, can't change or make 'em better; for if they could, you certainly would have try'd the Virtues of 'em upon your own—eh *Bowman!* ha, ha, ha.——

Bow. Bravo! my Lord, Bravo!

Æſop. My Imperfections are from Head to Foot, as well as your Lordſhip's.

Lord Ch. I beg your Pardon there, Sir; though my Body's impaired—my Head is as good

good as ever it was; and as a Proof of this, I'll lay you a hundred Guineas——

Æsop. Does your Lordship propose a Wager as a Proof of the Goodness of your Head?

Lord Ch. And why not?——Wagers are now-a-days the only Proofs and Arguments that are made Use of by People of Fashion: All Disputes about Politics, Operas, Trade, Gaming, Horse-racing, or Religion, are determined now, by *Six to Four*, and *Ten to One*, and Persons of Quality are by this Method most agreeably releas'd from the Hardship of Thinking or Reasoning upon any Subject.

Æsop. Very convenient truly!

Lord Ch. Convenient! aye, and *moral* too.——This Invention of Betting, unknown to you *Greeks*, among many other Virtues, prevents Bloodshed, and preserves Family Affections——

Æsop. Prevents Bloodshed!

Lord Ch. I'll tell ye how—When Gentlemen quarrelled heretofore, what did they do?——they drew their *Swords*——I have been run through the Body myself, but no Matter for that——What do they do now? They draw their *Purses*—before the Lie can be given, a Wager is laid, and so, instead of resenting, we pocket our Affronts.

Æsop. Most sophistically argued, indeed, my Lord;—but how can it preserve Family Affections?

Lord

Lord Ch. I'll tell you that too——An old Woman, you'll allow, Mr. *Æſop*, is a Thing to be but a bad Thing——what ſay you, *Bowman*?——

Bow. A very bad Thing indeed, my Lord.

Lord Ch. Ergo, an Old Woman with a good Conſtitution, and a damn'd large Jointure upon your Eſtate, is the Devil——My Mother was the very Thing——and yet from the Moment I *pitied* her, I never once wiſh'd her dead, but was really uneaſy when ſhe tumbled down Stairs, and did not ſpeak a ſingle Word for a whole Fortnight.

Æſop. Affectionate indeed!——but what does your Lordſhip mean by *pitied* her?

Lord. 'Tis a Term of ours upon theſe Occaſions——I back'd her Life againſt two old Counteſſes, an Aunt of Sir *Harry Rattle*'s that was troubled with an Aſthma, my fat Landlady at *Salt-hill*, and the Mad-Woman at *Tunbridge*, at Five Hundred each *per Annum*: She out-liv'd 'em all but the laſt, by which Means I hedg'd-off a damn'd Jointure, made her Life an Advantage to me, and ſo continued my filial Affections to her laſt Moments.

Æſop. I am fully ſatisfied——and in return your Lordſhip may command *me*.

Lord Ch. None of your Waters for me; damn 'em all; I never drink any but at *Bath*——I came merely for a little Converſation with you, and to ſee your *Elyſian* Fields here——

here—[*Looking about thro' his Glaſs*] which, by the bye, Mr. *Æſop*, are laid out moſt deteſtably—No Taſte, no Fancy in the whole World!——Your River there—what d'ye call——

Æſop. *Styx*——

Lord Ch. Ay, *Styx*—why 'tis as ſtrait as *Fleet-ditch*——You ſhould have given it a Serpentine Sweep, and ſlope the Banks of it—The Place, indeed, has very fine *Capabilities*; but you ſhould clear the Wood to the Left, and clump the Trees upon the Right: In ſhort, the Whole wants Variety, Extent, Contraſt, and Inequality—[*Going towards the Orcheſtra, ſtops ſuddenly, and looks into the Pit*] Upon my Word, here's a very fine *Hah-hah!* and a moſt curious Collection of Ever-Greens and Flow'ring-Shrubs——

Æſop. We let Nature take her Courſe; our chief Entertainment is Contemplation, which I ſuppoſe is not allowed to interrupt your Lordſhip's Pleaſures.

Lord Ch. I beg your Pardon there——No Man has ever ſtudied or drank harder than I have—except my Chaplain; and I'll match my Library and Cellar againſt any Nobleman's in Chriſtendom—ſhan't I, *Bowman*, eh?

Bow. That you may indeed, my Lord; and I'll go your Lordſhip's Halves, ha, ha, ha.

Æſop. If your Lordſhip would apply more to the firſt, and drink our Waters to forget the laſt——

Lord

Lord Ch. What, relinquish my Bottle! What the Devil shall I do to kill Time then?

Æsop. Has your Lordship no Wife or Children to entertain you?

Lord Ch. Children! not I, faith—My Wife has, for ought I know——I have not seen her these Seven Years——

Æsop. You surprize me!

Lord Ch. 'Tis the Way of the World, for all that——I married for a Fortune; she for a Title. When we both had got what we wanted, the sooner we parted the better——We did so; and are now waiting for the happy Moment, that will give to one of us the Liberty of playing the same Farce over again—eh *Bowman!*

Bow. Good, good; you have puzzled the Philosopher.

Æsop. The *Greeks* esteem'd matrimonial Happiness their *Summum Bonum.*

Lord Ch. More Fools they! 'tis not the only Thing they were mistaken in——My Brother *Dick*, indeed, married for Love; and he and his Wife have been fattening these five and twenty Years, upon their *Summum Bonum*, as you call it——They have had a Dozen and half of Children, and may have half a Dozen more, if an Apoplexy don't step in, and interrupt their *Summum Bonum*——eh *Bowman?* ha! ha! ha!

Bow. Your Lordship never said a better Thing in your Life.

Lord Ch. 'Tis lucky for the Nation, to be ſure, that there are People who breed, and are fond of one another — One Man of elegant Notions is ſufficient in a Family; for which Reaſon I have bred up *Dick*'s eldeſt Son myſelf; and a fine Gentleman he is — is not he, *Bowman?* ——

Bow. A very fine Gentleman, indeed, my Lord.

Lord Ch. And as for the reſt of the Litter, they may fondle and fatten upon *Summum Bonum*, as their loving Parents have done before 'em.

Bow. Look there! my Lord —— I'll be hang'd if that is not your Lordſhip's Nephew in the Grove.

Æſop. I dare ſwear it is. He has been here juſt now, and has entertained me with *his* elegant Notions.

Lord Ch. Let us go to him; I'll lay Six to Four that he has been gallanting with ſome of the Beauties of Antiquity — *Helen* or *Cleopatra*, I warrant you; —— Egad, let *Lucretia* take Care of herſelf; ſhe'll catch a *Tarquin*, I can tell her that — He is his Uncles's own Nephew, ha, ha, ha, —— Egad, I find myſelf in Spirits; I'll go and coquet a little myſelf with them — *Bowman*, lend me your Arm; and you, *William*, hold me up a little — [William *treads upon his Toes.*] — Ho — Damn the Fellow, he always treads upon my Toes — Eugh — I ſhan't be able to gallant

it

it this half Hour—Well, dear Philoſopher,—diſpoſe of your Water to thoſe that want it—There is no one Action of my Life, or Qualification of my Mind and Body, that is a Burden to me: And there is nothing in *your* World, or in ours, I have to wiſh for, unleſs that you could rid me of my Wife, and furniſh me with a better Pair of Legs—eh, *Bowman*——Come along, come along.

Bow. Game to the laſt! my Lord.

[*Ex. Lord* Chalk. *and* Bow.

Æſop. How flattering is Folly! His Lordſhip here, ſupported only by Vanity, Vivacity, and his Friend Mr. *Bowman*, can fancy himſelf the wiſeſt, and is the happieſt of Mortals.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Tatoo.

Mrs. Tat. Why don't you come along, Mr. *Tatoo*? what the deuce are you afraid of?

Æſop. Don't be angry, young Lady; the Gentleman is your Husband, I ſuppoſe.

Mrs. Tat. How do you know that, eh? What you an't all Conjurers in this World, are you?

Æſop. Your Behaviour to him is a ſufficient Proof of his Condition, without the Gift of Conjuration.

Mrs. Tat. Why I was as free with him before Marriage, as I am now; I never was coy or prudiſh in my Life.

Æſop. I believe you, Madam; pray, how long have you been married? you ſeem to be very young, Lady.

Mrs. Tat. I am old enough for a Husband, and have been married long enough to be tired of one.

Æſop. How long, pray?

Mrs. Tat. Why above three Months; I married Mr. *Tatoo* without my Guardian's Conſent.

Æſop. If you married him with your own Conſent, I think you might continue your Affection a little longer.

Mrs. Tat. What ſignifies what you think, If I don't think ſo?—We are quite tired of one another, and are come to drink ſome of your *Le—Lethaly——Lethily*, I think they call it, to forget one another, and be unmarried again.

Æſop. The Waters can't divorce you, Madam; and you may eaſily forget him, without the Aſſiſtance of *Lethe*.

Mrs. Tat. Ay; how ſo?

Æſop. By remembering continually he is your Husband; there are ſeveral Ladies have no other Receipt—But what does the Gentleman ſay to this?

Mrs. Tat. What ſignifies what he ſays? I an't ſo young and ſo fooliſh as that comes to, to be directed by my Husband, or to care what either he ſays, or you ſay.

Mr.

Mr. Tat. Sir, I was a Drummer in a marching Regiment, when I ran away with that young Lady—I immediately bought out of the Corps, and thought myſelf made for ever; little imagining that a poor vain Fellow was purchaſing Fortune, at the Expence of his Happineſs.

Æſop. 'Tis even ſo, Friend; Fortune and Felicity are as often at Variance as Man and Wife.

Mr. Tat. I found it ſo, Sir——This high Life (as I thought it) did not agree with me; I have not laugh'd, and ſcarcely ſlept ſince my Advancement; and unleſs your Wiſdom can alter her Notions, I muſt e'en quit the Bleſſings of a fine Lady and her Portion, and, for Content, have recourſe to Eight-pence a Day, and my Drum again.

Æſop. Pray who has adviſ'd you to a Separation?

Mrs. Tat. Several young Ladies of my Acquaintance, who tell me they are not angry at me for marrying him; but being fond of him now I have married him; and they ſay I ſhould be as compleat a fine Lady as any of 'em, if I would but procure a *ſeparate Divorcement.*

Æſop. Pray, Madam, will you let me know what you call a fine Lady?

Mrs. Tat. Why, a fine Lady, and a fine Gentleman, are two of the fineſt Things upon Earth.

Æſop.

Æſop. I have juſt now had the Honour of knowing what a fine Gentleman is; ſo pray confine yourſelf to the Lady.

Mrs. Tat. A fine Lady, before Marriage, lives with her Papa and Mamma, who breed her up till ſhe learns to deſpiſe 'em, and reſolves to do nothing they bid her; this makes her ſuch a prodigious Favourite, that ſhe wants for nothing.

Æſop. So, Lady.

Mrs. Tat. When once ſhe is her own Miſtreſs, then comes the Pleaſure!——

Æſop. Pray let us hear.

Mrs. Tat. She lies in Bed all Morning, rattles about all Day, and ſits up all Night; ſhe goes every where, and ſees every thing; knows every body, and loves no body; ridicules her Friends, coquets with her Lovers, ſets 'em together by the Ears, tells Fibs, makes Miſchief, buys China, cheat at Cards, keeps a Pug-dog, and hates the Parſons; ſhe laughs much, talks aloud, never bluſhes, ſays what ſhe will, does what ſhe will, goes where ſhe will, marries whom ſhe pleaſes, hates her Huſband in a Month, breaks his Heart in four, becomes a Widow, ſlips from her Gallants, and begins the World again—— There's a Life for you; what do you think of a fine Lady now?

Æſop. As I expected — you are very young, Lady; and if you are not very careful, your natural Propenſity to Noiſe and Affectation, will

will run you headlong into Folly, Extravagance, and Repentance.

Mrs. Tat. What would you have me do?

Æſop. Drink a large Quantity of *Lethe* to the Loſs of your Acquaintance; and do you, Sir, drink another to forget this falſe Step of your Wife; for whilſt you remember her Folly, you can never thoroughly regard her, and whilſt you keep good Company, Lady, as you call it, and follow their Example, you can never have a juſt Regard for your Huſband; ſo both drink and be happy.

Mrs. Tat. Well, give it me whilſt I am in Humour, or I ſhall certainly change my Mind again.

Æſop. Be patient, till the reſt of the Company drink, and divert yourſelf, in the mean time, with walking in the Grove.

Mrs. Tat. Well, come along, Huſband, and keep me in Humour, or I ſhall beat you ſuch an Alarum as you never beat in all your Life.

[*Exeunt Mr. and Mrs.* Tatoo.]

Enter Frenchman, *ſinging.*

French. Monſieur, votre Serviteur — pourquoi ne repondez vous pas? — Je dis que je ſuis votre Serviteur ——

Æſop. I don't underſtand you, Sir ——

French. Ah le Barbare! il ne parle pas *Francois* ——Vat, Sir, you no ſpeak de *French* Tongue?

Æſop.

Æsop. No really, Sir, I am not so polite.

French. En verité, Monsieur *Esope*, you have not much Politesse, if one may be Judge by your Figure and Appearance.

Æsop. Nor you much Wisdom, if one may judge of your Head, by the Ornaments about it.

French. Qu'est cela donc? Vat you mean to front a Man, Sir?

Æsop. No, Sir, 'tis to you I am speaking.

French. Vel, Sir, I not a Man! vat is you take me for? vat I Beast? vat I Horse? parbleu!

Æsop. If you insist upon it, Sir, I would advise you to lay aside your Wings and Tail, for they undoubtedly eclipse your Manhood.

French. Upon my Vard, Sir, if you treat a Gentilhomme of my Rank and Qualité comme ça, depen upon it, I shall be a litel en Cavalier vit you.

Æsop. Pray, Sir, of what Rank and Quality are you?

French. Sir, I am a Marquis *François*, j'entens les Beaux Arts, Sir, I have been an Avanturier all over the Varld, and am à present en *Angleterre*, in *England*, vere I am more honoré and careſs den ever I vas in my own Countrie, or inteed any vere elſe—

Æsop. And pray, Sir, what is your Buſineſs in *England*?

French. I am arrive dere, Sir, pour polir la Nation—de *Inglis*, Sir, have too much

a Lead in deir Heels, and too much a Tought in deir Head; ſo, Sir, if I can ligten bote, I ſhall make dem tout à fait *François*, and quite anoder ting.

Æſop. And pray, Sir, in what particular Accompliſhments does your Merit conſiſt?

French. Sir, I ſpeak de *French*, j'ai bonne Addreſſe, I dance un Minuet, I ſing des littel Chanſons, and I have-- une tolerable Aſſurance; En fin, Sir, my Merit conſiſt in one Vard—I am Foreignere--and entre nous--vile de *Englis* be ſo great a Fool to love de Foreignere better dan demſelves, de Foreignere vould ſtill be more great a Fool, did dey not leave deir own Counterie, vere dey have noting at all, and come to *Inglande*, vere dey vant for noting at all, perdie——Cela n'eſt il pas vrai, Monſieur *Æſop*?

Æſop. Well, Sir, what is your Buſineſs with me?

French. Attendez un pue, you ſhall hear, Sir—I am in Love vit de grande Fortune of one *Englis* Lady; and de Lady, ſhe be in Love with my Qualité and Bagatelles. Now, Sir, me vant twenty or tirty Douzaines of your Vaters, for fear I be obligé to leave *Inglande*, before I have fini dis grande Affaire.

Æſop. Twenty or thirty Dozen! for what?

French. For my Crediteurs; to make 'em forget de Vay to my Logement, and no trouble me for de future.

Æſop. What; have you ſo many Creditors!

French. So many! begar I have 'em dans tous les Quartiers de la Ville, in all Parts of de Town, fait ——

Æſop. Wonderful and ſurpriſing!

French. Vonderful! vat is vonderful — dat I ſhould borrow Money?

Æſop. No, Sir, that any body ſhould lend it you ——

French. En verité vous vous trompez; you do miſtake it, mon Ami: If Fortune give me no Money, Nature gives me des Talens; j'ai des Talens, Monſieur *Eſope*; vech are de ſame ting —— par Example; de *Engliſman* have de Money, I have de Flatterie and bonne Addreſſe; and a little of dat from a *French* Tongue is very good Credit and Securité for touſand Pound — Eh! bien donc, ſal I have dis twenty or tirty Douzaines of your vater? Ouy, oh non?

Æſop. 'Tis impoſſible, Sir,

French. Impoſſible! pourquoi donc? vy not?

Æſop. Becauſe if every fine Gentleman, who owes Money, ſhould make the ſame Demand, we ſhould have no Water left for our other Cuſtomers.

French. Que voulez vous que je faſſe donc? Vat muſt I do den, Sir?

Æſop. Marry the Lady as ſoon as you can, pay your Debts with Part of her Portion, drink

drink the Water to forget your Extravagance, retire with her to your own Country, and be a better Oeconomiſt for the future,

French. Go to my own Contré!—Je vous demande Pardon, I had much rather ſtay vere I am; I cannot go dere, upon my Vard——

Æſop. Why not, my Friend!

French. Entre nous, I had much rather paſs for one *French* Marquiſs in *Inglande*, keep bonne Compagnie, manger des Delicateſſes, and do no ting at all; dan keep a Shop en *Provence*, couper and friſſer les Cheveux, and live upon Soupe and Sallade de reſt of my Life—

Æſop. I cannot blame you for your Choice; and if other People are ſo blind not to diſtinguiſh the Barber from the fine Gentleman, their Folly muſt be their Puniſhment—— and you ſhall take the Benefit of the Water with them.

French. Monſieur *Eſope*, ſans Flatterie ou Compliments, I am your very humble Serviteur—*Jean Friſſeron* en *Provence*, ou le Marquiſs de *Poulville* en *Angleterre*.

[*Exit* Frenchman.

Æſop. Shield me and defend me! another fine Lady!

Enter Mrs. Riot.

Mrs. Riot. A Monſter! a filthy Brute!

your Waterman are as unpolite upon the *Styx* as upon the *Thames*—Stow a Lady of Fashion with Tradesmens Wives and Mechanics—Ah! what's this, *Serberus* or *Plutus!* [*seeing Æsop.*] am I to be frighted with all the Monsters of this *internal* World.

Æsop. What is the Matter, Lady?

Mrs. Riot. Every thing is the matter, my Spirits are uncompos'd, and every Circumstance about me in a perfect Dilemma.

Æsop. What has disorder'd you thus?

Mrs. Riot. Your filthy Boatman, *Scarroon*, there.

Æsop. Charon, Lady, you mean.

Mrs. Riot. And who are you, you ugly Creature you; if I see any more of you I shall die with *Temerity*.

Æsop. The Wise think me handsome, Madam.

Mrs. Riot. I hate the Wise; but who are you?

Æsop. I am *Æsop*, Madam, honour'd this Day by *Proserpine* with the Distribution of the Waters of *Lethe*; command me.

Mrs. Riot. Shew me to the Pump-Room then, Fellow—— where's the Company—I die in Solitude.

Æsop. What Company?

Mrs. Riot. The best Company, People of Fashion! the *Beau Monde!* shew me to none of your gloomy Souls, who wander about in your Groves and Streams—shew me to glittering

tering Balls, enchanting Maſquerades, raviſhing Operas, and all the polite Enjoyments of *Elyſium*.

Æſop. This is a Language unknown to me, Lady—No ſuch fine Doings here, and very little good Company (as you call it) in *Elyſium*—

Mrs. Riot. What! no Operas! eh! no *Eliſian* then! *Sings fantaſtically in* Italian.] *'Sfortunato Monticelli!* baniſh'd *Elyſian*, as well as the *Hay-Market!* Your Taſte here, I ſuppoſe, riſes no higher than your *Shakeſpears* and your *Johnſons*; oh you *Goats* and *Vandils!* in the Name of Barbarity take 'em to yourſelves, we are tir'd of 'em upon Earth—one goes indeed to a Playhouſe ſometimes, becauſe one does not know how elſe one can kill one's Time—every body goes, becauſe—becauſe—all the World's there—but for my part—call *Scarroon*, and let him take me back again, I'll ſtay no longer here—ſtupid Immortals!

Æſop. You are a happy Woman, that have neither Cares nor Follies to diſturb you.

Mrs. Riot. Cares! ha! ha! ha! Nay, now I muſt laugh in your ugly Face, my Dear: What Cares, does your Wiſdom think, can enter into the Circle of a fine Lady's Enjoyments?

Æſop. By the Account I have juſt heard of a fine Lady's Life, her very Pleaſures are both

Follies

Follies and Cares; ſo drink the Water, and forget them, Madam.

Mrs. Riot. Oh gad! that was ſo like my Huſband now—forget my Follies! forget the Faſhion, forget my Being, the very *Quinteſſence* and *Emptity* of a fine Lady! the Fellow would make me as great a Brute as my Huſband.

Æſop. You have an Huſband then, Madam?

Mrs. Riot. Yes—I think ſo—an Huſband and no Huſband—Come, fetch me ſome of your Water; if I muſt forget ſomething, I had as good forget him, for he's grown inſufferable o'late.

Æſop. I thought, Madam, you had nothing to complain of—

Mrs. Riot. One's Huſband, you know, is almoſt next to nothing.

Æſop. How has he offended you?

Mrs. Riot. The Man talks of nothing but his Money, and my Extravagance—won't remove out of the filthy City, tho' he knows I die for the other End of the Town; nor leave off his naſty Merchandizing, tho' I've labour'd to convince him, he loſes Money by it. The Man was once tolerable enough, and let me have Money when I wanted it; but now he's never out of a Tavern, and is grown ſo valiant, that, do you know—he has preſum'd to contradict me, and refuſe me Money upon every Occaſion.

Æſop.

Æſop. And all this without any Provocation on your Side?

Mrs. Riot. Laud! how ſhould I provoke him? I ſeldom ſee him, very ſeldom ſpeak to the Creature, unleſs I want Money; beſides, he's out all Day—

Æſop. And you all Night, Madam: Is it not ſo?

Mrs. Riot. I keep the beſt Company, Sir, and Day-light is no agreeable Sight to a polite Aſſembly; the Sun is very well and comfortable, to be ſure, for the lower Part of the Creation: but to Ladies who have a true Taſte of Pleaſure, Wax Candles, or no Candles, are preferable to all the Sun-beams in the Univerſe——

Æſop. Prepoſterous Fancy!

Mrs. Riot. And ſo, moſt delicate ſweet Sir, you don't approve my Scheme; ha! ha! ha!—oh you ugly Devil you! have you the Vanity to imagine People of Faſhion will mind what you ſay? or that to learn Politeneſs and Breeding, it is neceſſary to take a Leſſon of Morality out of *Æſop*'s Fables—ha! ha! ha!

Æſop. It is neceſſary to get a little Reflection ſomewhere; when theſe Spirits leave you, and your Senſes are ſurfeited, what muſt be the Conſequence?—

Mrs. Riot. Oh, I have the beſt Receipt in the World for the Vapours; and leſt the Poiſon of your Precepts ſhould taint my Vivacity,

city, I muſt beg leave to take it now, by way of *Anecdote*.

Æſop. Oh, by all means—Ignorance, and Vanity!

Mrs. Riot. (Drawing out a Card) Lady *Rantan*'s Compliments to Mrs. *Riot*.

SONG.

I.

The Card invites, in Crowds we fly
To join the jovial Rout, *full Cry;*
What Joy from Cares and Plagues all Day,
To hie to the Midnight Hark-away.

II.

Nor Want, nor Pain, nor Grief, nor Care,
Nor droniſh Husbands enter there;
The Briſk, the Bold, the Young and Gay,
All hie to the Midnight Hark-away.

III.

Uncounted ſtrikes the Morning Clock,
And drowſy Watchmen idly knock;
Till Day-light peeps, we ſport and play,
And roar to the jolly Hark-away.

IV.

IV.

When tir'd with Sport, to Bed we creep,
And kill the tedious Day with Sleep;
To-morrow's welcome Call obey,
And again to the Midnight Hark-away.

Mrs. Riot. There's a Life for you, you old Fright! ſo trouble your Head no more about your Betters—I am ſo perfectly ſatisfied with myſelf, that I will not alter an Atom of me, for all you can ſay; ſo you may bottle up your Philoſophical Waters for your own Uſe, or for the Fools that want 'em—Gad's my Life! there's *Billy Butterfly* in the Grove—I muſt go to him—we ſhall ſo rally your Wiſdom between us—ha, ha, ha.

The Briſk, the Bold, the Young, the Gay,
All hie to the Midnight Hark-away.

[Exit. *Singing.*

Æſop. Unhappy Woman! nothing can retrieve her; when the Head has once a wrong Bias, 'tis ever obſtinate, in Proportion to its Weakneſs: But here comes one who ſeems to have no Occaſion for *Lethe* to make him more happy than he is.

Enter Drunken Man *and* Taylor.

D. Man. Come along, Neighbour *Snip*, come along Taylor; don't be afraid of Hell before you die, you ſniv'ling Dog you.

Taylor. For Heaven's ſake, Mr. *Riot*, don't be ſo boiſterous with me, leſt we ſhould offend the Powers below.

Æſop. What in the Name of Ridicule have we here!—So, Sir, what are you?

D. Man. Drunk—very drunk, at your Service.

Æſop. That's a Piece of Information I did not want.

D. Man. And yet it's all the Information I can give you.

Æſop. Pray, Sir, what brought you hither?

D. Man. Curioſity, and a Hackney Coach.

Æſop. I mean, Sir, have you any Occaſion for my Waters?

D. Man. Yes, great Occaſion; if you'll do me the Favour to qualify them with ſome good Arrack and Orange Juice.

Æſop. Sir!

D. Man. Sir!—Don't ſtare ſo, old Gentleman—let us have a little Converſation with you.

Æſop. I would know if you have any thing oppreſſes your Mind, and makes you unhappy.

D. Man. You are certainly a very great Fool, old Gentleman; did you ever know a Man drunk and unhappy at the ſame Time?

Æſop. Never otherwiſe, for a Man who has loſt his Senſes—

D. Man.

D. Man. Has loſt the moſt troubleſome Companions in the World, next to Wives and Bum-bailiffs.

Æſop. But, pray, what is your Buſineſs with me?

D. Man. Only to demonſtrate to you that you are an Aſs—

Æſop. Your humble Servant.

D. Man. And to ſhew you, that whilſt I can get ſuch Liquor as I have been drinking all Night, I ſhall never come for your *Water* Specificks againſt Care and Tribulation: However, old Gentleman, if you'll do one thing for me, I ſhan't think my Time and Converſation thrown away upon you.

Æſop. Any thing in my Power.

D. Man. Why, then, here's a ſmall Matter for you; and, do you hear me? get me one of the beſt Whores in your Territories.

Æſop. What do you mean?

D. Man. To refreſh myſelf in the Shades here after my Journey——Suppoſe now you introduce me to *Proſerpine*, who knows how far my Figure and Addreſs may tempt her; and if her Majeſty is over nice, ſhew me but her Maids of Honour, and I'll warrant you they'll jump at a Bit of freſh Mortality.

Æſop. Monſtrous!

D. Man. Well, well, if it is monſtrous, I ſay no more—if her Majeſty and Retinue are ſo very virtuous—I ſay no more;—but I'll tell you what, old Friend, if you'll lend

me your Wife for half an Hour; when you make a Visit above, you shall have mine as long as you please; and if upon Trial you should like mine better than your own, you shall carry her away to the Devil with you, and ten thousand Thanks into the Bargain.

Æsop. This is not to be borne; either be silent, or you'll repent this drunken Insolence.

D. Man. What a cross old Fool it is!—I presume, Sir, from the Information of your Hump, and your Wisdom, that your Name is—is—what the Devil is it?

Æsop. *Æsop*, at your Service—

D. Man. The same, the same—I knew you well enough, you old sensible Pimp you—many a Time has my Flesh felt Birch upon your account; prithee, what possess'd thee to write such foolish old Stories of a Cock and a Bull, and I don't no what, to plague poor innocent Lads with? It was damn'd cruel in you, let me tell you that.

Æsop. I am now convinc'd, Sir, I have written 'em to very little Purpose.

D. Man. To very little I assure you—But never mind it—Damn it, you are a fine old *Grecian*, for all that [*claps him on the Back*] Come here, *Snip*—is not he a fine old *Grecian*?—And tho' he is not the handsomest, or best dress'd Man in the World, he has ten times more Sense than either you or I have—I.

Jay. Pray Neighbour, introduce me.

D. Man.

[illegible] Pardon—Mr. Æsop, this [illegible] is my Taylor, and an honest [illegible] while he do'nt hin Bidder; but since he turn'd *Methodist*, and took to Preaching, he has cabbag'd one Yard in Six from all his Customers; now you know him, hear what he has to say, while I go and pick up in the Wood here—Upon my Soul, you are a fine old *Grecian*! [*Exit* D. Mars.

Æsop. [*To Taylor*] Come, Friend, don't be dejected; what is your Business?

Tay. I am troubled in Mind.

Æsop. Is your Case particular, Friend?

Tay. No, indeed, I believe it is pretty general in our Parish.

Æsop. What is it? speak out, Friend?—

Tay. It runs continually in my Head, that I am——

Æsop. What?

Tay. A Cuckold——

Æsop. Have a Care, Friend, Jealousy is a rank Weed, and chiefly takes Root in a barren Soil.

Tay. I am sure my Head is full of nothing else——

Æsop. But how came you to a Knowledge of your Misfortune? Has not your Wife as much Wit as you?

Tay. A great deal more, Sir; and that is one Reason for my believing myself dishonour'd——

Æsop.

Æsop. The least Leaven has some Weight in it, yet it does not amount to a Consideration.

Tay. I have more to say for my self, if your Worship will but hear me.

Æsop. I shall attend to you.

Tay. My Wife has a very High Blood in her; that she is lately turn'd Papist, and is always railing at me and the Government. The Priest and she are continually laying their Heads together, and I am afraid he has perfuaded her, that it will save her precious Soul, if she cuckolds a Heretic Taylor.

Æsop. Oh, don't think so hardly of em.

Tay. Lord, Sir, you don't know what Tricks are going forward above Religion, indeed, in the Outside Stuff, but Wickedness is the Lining.

Æsop. Why, you are in a Passion, Friend; if you would but exert yourself thus at a proper Time, you might keep the Fox from your Poultry.

Tay. Lord, Sir, my Wife has as much Passion again as I have; and whenever she's up, I curb my Temper, sit down, and say nothing.

Æsop. What Remedy have you to propose for this Misfortune?

Tay. I would propose to dip my Head in the River, to wash away my Fancies—and if you'll let me take a few Bottles to my Wife, if the Water is of a cooling Nature, I may perhaps

perhaps be eaſy that Way; but I ſhall do as your Worſhip pleaſes.

Æſop. I am afraid this Method won't anſwer, Friend: Suppoſe therefore you drink to forget your Suſpicions, for they are nothing more, and let your Wife drink to forget your Uneaſineſs—A mutual Confidence will ſucceed, and conſequently mutual Happineſs.

Tay. I have ſuch a Spirit, I can never bear to be diſhonour'd in my Bed.

Æſop. The Water will cool your Spirit, and if it can but lower your Wife's, the Buſineſs is done——Go for a Moment to your Companion, and you ſhall drink preſently; but do nothing raſhly.

Tay. I can't help it, Raſhneſs is my Fault, Sir, but Age and more Experience, I hope, will cure me—Your Servant, Sir—Indeed he is a fine old *Grecian!* [*Exit* Taylor.

Æſop. Poor Fellow, I pity him.

Enter Mercury.

Mer. What can be the Meaning, *Æſop*, that there are no more Mortals coming over? I perceive there is a great Buſtle on the other Side the *Styx*, and *Charon* has brought his Boat over without Paſſengers.

Æſop. Here he is to anſwer for himſelf.

Enter

Enter Charon, *laughing.*

Char. Oh! oh! oh!

Mer. What diverts you ſo, *Charon?*

Char. Why there's the Devil to do among the Mortals yonder; they are all together by the Ears.

Æſop. What's the Matter?

Char. There are ſome Ladies, who have been diſputing ſo long and ſo loud about taking Place and Precedency, that they have ſet their Relations a tilting at one another, to ſupport their Vanity: The Standers-by are ſome of them ſo frighted, and ſome of them ſo diverted at the Quarrel, that they have not Time to think of their Misfortunes; ſo I e'en left them to ſettle their Prerogatives by themſelves, and be Friends at their Leiſure.

Mer. What's to be done, *Æſop?*

Æſop. Diſcharge theſe we have, and finiſh the Buſineſs of the Day.

Enter Drunken Man *and Mrs.* Riot.

D. Man. I never went to pick up a Whore in my Life, but the firſt Woman I laid hold of was my dear virtuous Wife, and here ſhe is ——

Æſop. Is that Lady your Wife?

D. Man.

D. Man. Yes, Sir; and yours, if you pleaſe to accept of her——

Æſop. Tho' ſhe has formerly given too much into faſhionable Follies, ſhe now repents, and will be more prudent for the future.

D. Man. Lookee, Mr. *Æſop*, all your Preaching and Morality ſignifies nothing at all—but ſince your Wiſdom ſeems bent upon our Reformation, I'll tell you the only Way, old Boy, to bring it about. Let me have enough of your Water to ſettle my Head, and throw Madam into the River.

Æſop. 'Tis in vain to reaſon with ſuch Beings: Therefore, *Mercury*, ſummon the Mortals from the Grove, and we'll diſmiſs 'em to Earth, as happy as *Lethe* can make 'em——

SONG.

By MERCURY.

I.

Come Mortals, come, come follow me,
Come follow, follow, follow me,
To Mirth, and Joy, and Jollity;
Hark, hark, the Call, come, come and drink,
And leave your Cares by Lethe's *Brink.*

CHORUS.

Away then come, come, come away,
And Life ſhall hence be Holyday;
Nor jealous Fears, nor Strife, nor Pain,
Shall vex the jovial Heart again.

II.

To Lethe's *Brink then follow all,*
Then follow, follow, follow all,
'Tis Pleaſure courts, obey the Call;
And Mirth, and Jollity, and Joy,
Shall every future Hour employ.

CHORUS.

Away then come, come, come away,
And Life ſhall hence be Holyday;
Nor jealous Fears, nor Strife, nor Pain,
Shall vex the jovial Heart again.

[During the Song, the Characters enter from the Grove.

Æſop. Now Mortals attend; I have perceived from your Examinations, that you have miſtaken the Effect of your Diſtempers for the Cauſe — you would willingly be relieved from many Things which interfere with

with your Paſſions and Affections; while your Vices, from which all your Cares and Misfortunes ariſe, are totally forgotten and neglected. —— Then follow me, and drink to the Forgetfulneſs of Vice ——

'Tis Vice alone diſturbs the human Breaſt;
Care dies with Guilt; be virtuous, and be bleſt.

FINIS.